



PRESS NOTICE

BILL NETTLES UNITED STATES ATTORNEY DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

*1441 Main Street, Suite 500 * Columbia, SC 29201 * (803) 929-3000*

June 4, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT PERSON: William K. Witherspoon
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(803) 929-3000

LANCASTER COUNTY MAN SENTENCED TO TWENTY YEARS FOR DRUG CONSPIRACY

Columbia, South Carolina---- United States Attorney Bill Nettles stated today that Montello M. Hood, age 38, of Lancaster, South Carolina, was sentenced on Thursday in federal court in Columbia, South Carolina, for conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute 5 kilograms of cocaine and 50 grams or more of cocaine base (crack cocaine), a violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846. United States District Judge Joseph F. Anderson of Columbia sentenced Hood to 240 months (20 years) incarceration followed by 10 years of supervised release and a special assessment of \$100.

Evidence presented at the change of plea hearing established that Hood was known as a large scale seller of cocaine and crack cocaine in Lancaster County. The police used a number of confidential informants to make multiple purchases of crack

cocaine from Hood. In addition, on June 1, 2010, a Lancaster City Police Officer saw a vehicle driven by Hood traveling on Arch Street. The officer conducted a traffic stop on Hood's car. Hood pulled into the driveway of a residence near the stop and attempted to exit the vehicle and walk toward the home. The officer ran a warrant check on Hood and determined there was an outstanding warrant for his arrest. Hood was arrested on the warrant. During the inventory of the car, the officer found a purple Crown Royal bag containing a scale, a plastic spoon, and 4 separate plastic baggies containing both powder and crack cocaine.

Moreover the police had cultivated a number of informants who had given them information concerning the purchase and sale of cocaine and crack cocaine from Hood. These individuals indicated that they had purchased more than 5 kilograms of cocaine during their dealings with Hood. Hood pled guilty to these charges on December 16, 2011.

The case was investigated by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, Lancaster County Sheriff's Department and Lancaster City Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney William K. Witherspoon of the Columbia office handled the case.

#####